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Message Text

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40
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 NEA-09 IO-10 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 SAJ-01

EB-07 /077 W
---------- 129150
O R 291049Z APR 74
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7933
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 02427

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, PO, GW
SUBJECT: VOTING RESTRICTIONS ON PORTUGUESE EMIGRANTS

REF: STATE 31201

SUMMARY: THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAS TOLD US THAT THE FRG IN DECEMBER FORMALLY CONVEYED TO LISBON THE VIEW THAT VOTING IN PORTUGUESE ELECTIONS BY PORTUGUESE CITIZENS IN GERMANY IS CONTRARY TO THE VIENNA CONVENTION. THE GERMAN POSITION IS BASED ON POLITICAL/PUBLIC SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS, WHICH THEY CONSIDER OVERRIDING, AND IS NOT, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD, SUBJECT TO REVIEW. END SUMMARY.

1. THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAS INFORMED US THAT THE QUESTION OF VOTING BY PORTUGUESE EMIGRANTS WAS ACTIVE IN FRG-PORTUGUESE RELATIONS LAST OCTOBER-DECEMBER. TOWARD THE END OF OCTOBER PORTUGUESE CONSULATES IN THE FRG RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS FROM LISBON TO ESTABLISH VOTING LISTS OF PORTUGUESE CITIZENS WHO HAD BEEN IN THE FRG FOR LESS THAN FIVE YEARS (THOSE ABSENT FOR OVER FIVE YEARS WERE INELIGIBLE TO VOTE). IN EARLY NOVEMBER THE PORTUGUESE NOTIFIED THE FRG OF THEIR INTENTION TO
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SEND "COMMISSIONERS" TO EXPLAIN THE AIMS OF THE PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION TO PORTUGUESE CITIZENS IN THE FRG. THE FRG APPARENTLY EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS TO LISBON ABOUT THESE STEPS. THE PORTUGUESE EMBASSY IN BONN SUB-

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SEQUENTLY GOT INSTRUCTIONS FROM LISBON TO ESTABLISH POLLING BOOTHS IN THE PORTUGUESE CONSULATES IN THE FRG AND IN THE EMBASSY ITSELF. THE FRG THEN TOOK THE POSITION (IN WRITING) THAT SUCH ACTIVITY WAS CONTRARY TO THAT PART OF THE VIENNA CONVENTION WHICH DEFINES ACTS PERMITTED ON THE TERRITORY OF OTHER STATES (VOTING IS NOT A PERMITTED ACTIVITY). THERE HAVE BEEN NO FURTHER DEMARCHES FROM THE PORTUGUESE SIDE SINCE DECEMBER.

2. WE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE GERMAN POSITION WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE BEARING ON THE PROSPECTS OF THE MODERATE PARTIES IN THE PORTUGUESE ELECTION. OUR FOREIGN OFFICE CONTACTS TOOK THIS POINT BUT SAID THAT, REGRETTABLE AS THIS MIGHT BE, THERE WERE MUCH MORE IMPORTANT ISSUES AT STAKE FOR THE FRG. IF PORTUGUESE WERE PERMITTED TO VOTE IN THEIR ELECTIONS, A PRECEDENT COULD BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE VARIOUS OTHER FOREIGN WORKER GROUPS IN THE FRG. IN THE YUGOSLAV CASE, TERRORIST ACTIVITIES BY EMIGRE CROATIAN ORGANIZATIONS COULD ARISE. THE SITUATION WITH TURKS AND IRANIANS WAS ALSO POTENTIALLY DIFFICULT BECAUSE OF LEFTIST OR ANTI-REGIME ELEMENTS.

3. WE ASKED IF THERE WAS ANY POSSIBILITY OF REVIEW OF THE FRG POSITION. OUR CONTACTS PRACTICALLY RULED THIS OUT, STRESSING THAT PUBLIC SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS WERE OVERRIDING. THE GERMAN POSITION WAS VERY FIRM INDEED. THEY REITERATED THAT SINCE THEY HAD EXPRESSED THEIR VIEWS FORMALLY TO THE PORTUGUESE IN DECEMBER, THERE HAD BEEN NO FURTHER INITIATIVES ON THE PORTUGUESE SIDE. THE GERMANS CONSIDERED THE MATTER A DEAD ISSUE.
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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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